

REMARKS

Claims 1-50 are presently pending in the application. Claims 51-56 have been cancelled in this response without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a divisional or other application. Claim 1 has been amended in this response to clarify an aspect of the claim without narrowing the scope of this claim.

In the Office Action dated November 16, 2004, claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 16-18, 20-23, 29-34, 39, 40, 42-44 and 50 were rejected. More specifically, the status of the application in light of this Office Action is as follows:

(A) Applicants must affirm their election in response to the species restriction between Figures 1-2, 3, 4, 5, and 6;

(B) The drawings were objected to because of the informal quality of the lettering;

(C) Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 16-18, 20-23, 29-34, 39, 40, 42-44 and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,344,805 to Wapner ("Wapner"); and

(D) Claims 5, 11-15, 19, 24-28, 35-38, 41 and 45-49 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the features of the claims from which they depend.

The undersigned attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for engaging in a telephone conference on January 24, 2005, and requests that this paper constitute the applicants' Interview Summary. During that telephone conference, the present Office Action, Wapner, and a proposed amendment to improve the clarity of claim 1 were discussed. The Examiner tentatively agreed that the Section 102(b) rejection of claim 1 will be withdrawn.

A. Restriction Requirement

Applicants affirm the election of Figure 6, claims 1-6, 8, 9, and 11-50. Applicants reserve the right to traverse the Examiner's assertion that no claims are generic.

B. Response to the Drawing Objection

The drawings were objected to because of the informal quality of the lettering. Formal drawings were filed on November 10, 2004. Accordingly, the objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

C. Response to the Section 102(b) Rejection

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 16-18, 20-23, 29-34, 39, 40, 42-44 and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wapner. In light of the agreement reached during the January 24 telephone conference, the Section 102(b) rejection of claim 1 will be withdrawn.

Claims 2-4, 6, 8, 9 and 16 depend from claim 1. Accordingly, the Section 102(b) rejection of these claims should be withdrawn for the reasons discussed above with reference to claim 1 and for the additional features of these claims.

Independent claims 17, 30 and 40 have, *inter alia*, features generally similar to those included in claim 1. Accordingly, the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 17, 30 and 40 and their respective dependent claims should be withdrawn for the reasons discussed above with reference to claim 1 and for the additional features of these claims.

D. Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5, 11-15, 19, 24-28, 35-38, 41 and 45-49 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the features of the claims from which they depend. These claims have not been rewritten in independent form because their respective independent claims should now be allowable.

E. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the claims pending in the application comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and patentably define over the applied art. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-6465.

Respectfully submitted,

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